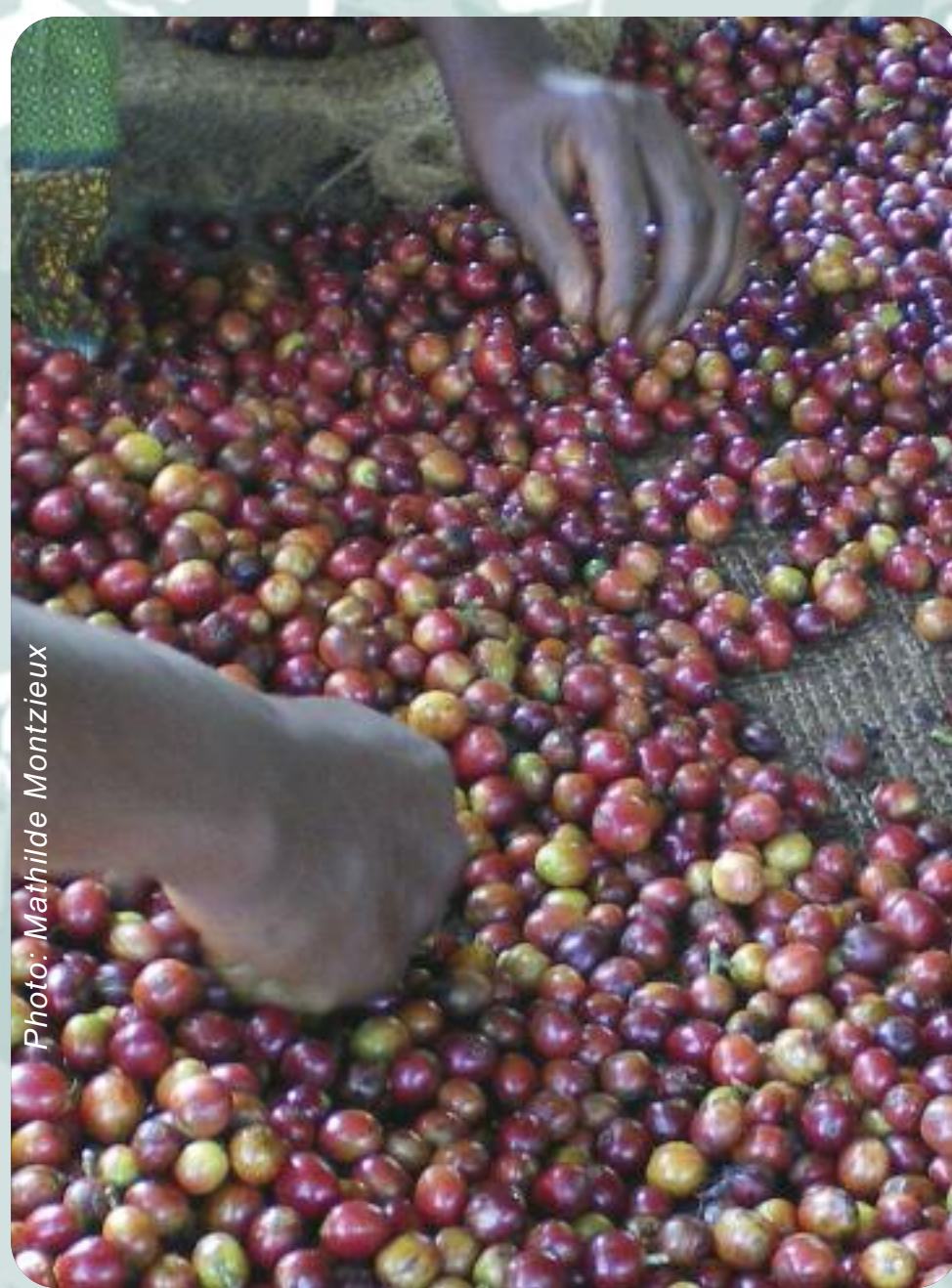
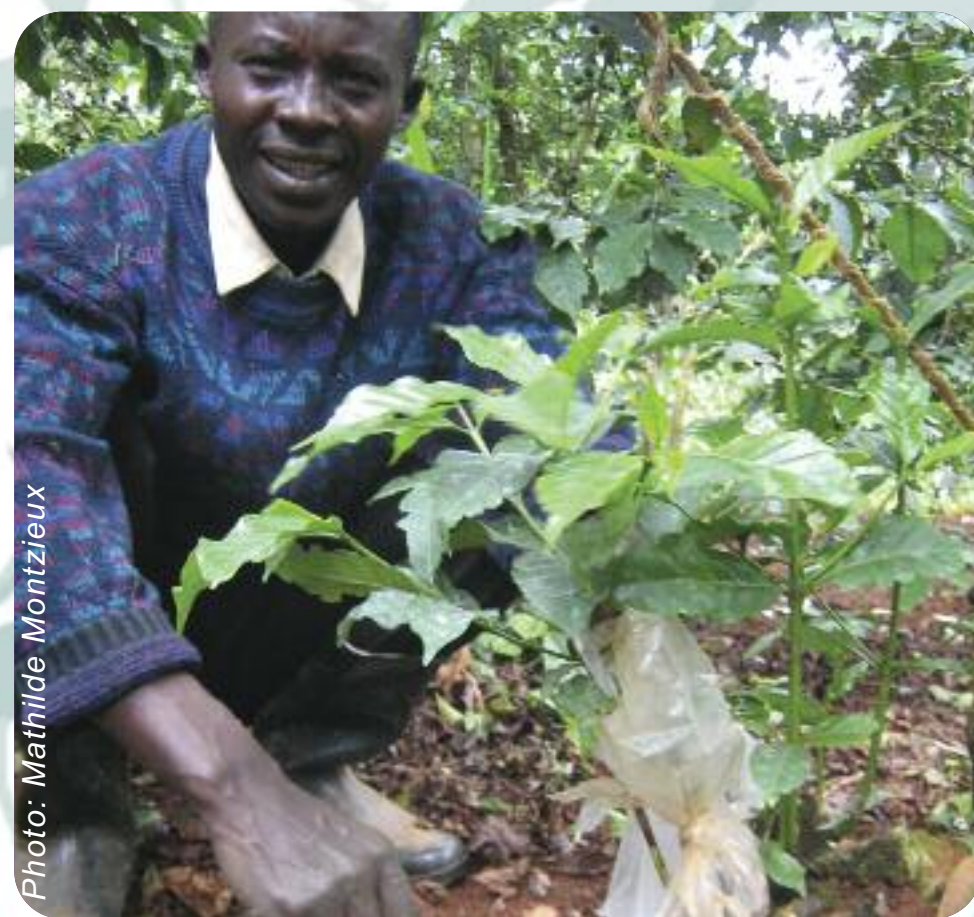


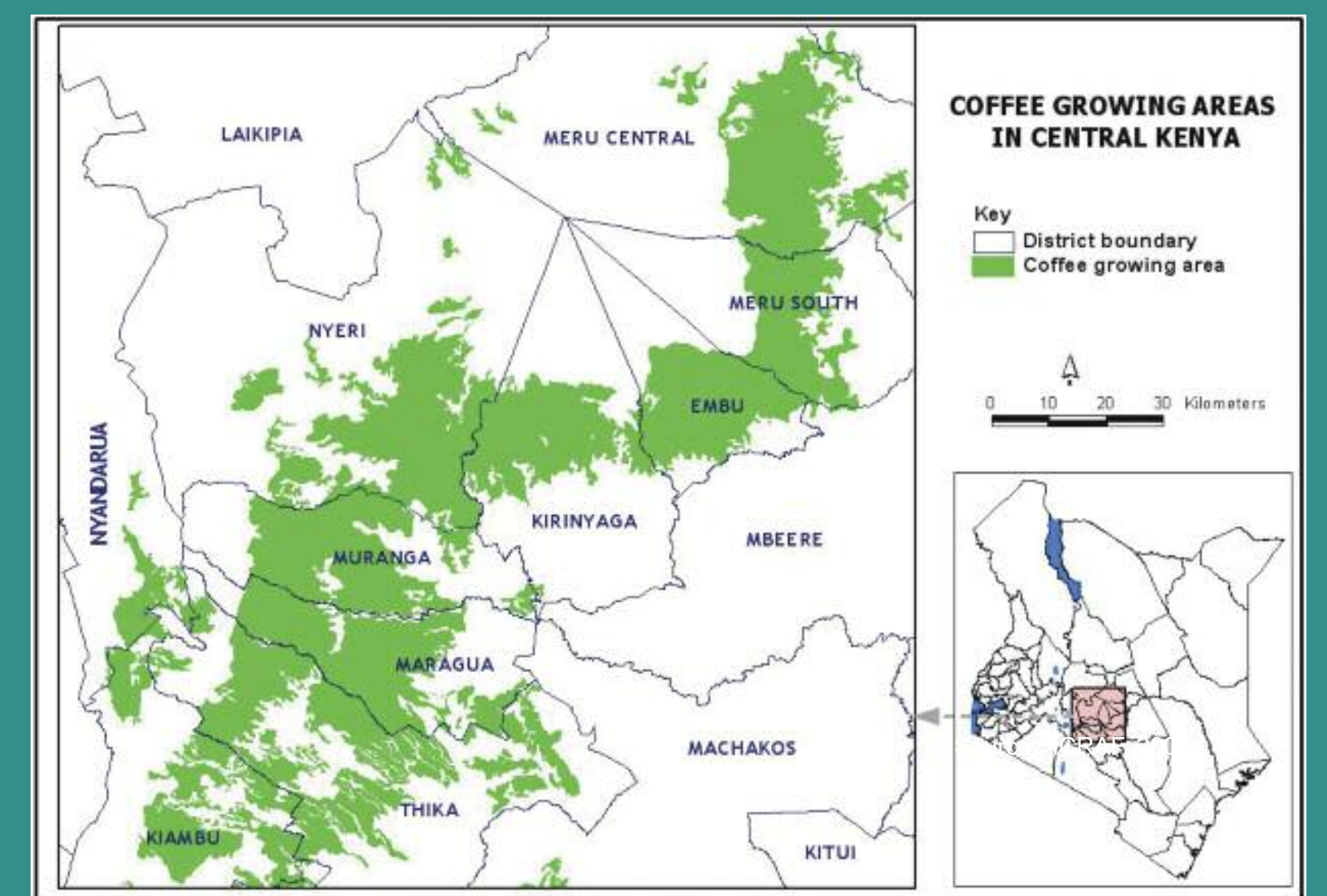
# Agroforestry a means to achieve economic sustainability for smallholder coffee production in the Mount Kenya Region

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In recent years, the Kenya coffee sector has been weakened by several factors, including the 1998-2004 world price crisis and a double-digit inflation rate that has persisted for over a decade. Today, Kenyan coffee stakeholders question whether coffee production can be profitable and worry over the future of their world renowned product.



Mount Kenya Region: first coffee growing area of Kenya



## Objective

The present research (ICRAF-CIRAD), which was undertaken through the CAFNET project, aims to understand the conditions under which coffee could remain profitable and to identify the main factors driving production.

## Methods and partners

Three cooperatives located in 3 different agro-ecological areas -- Karatina (Barichu society), Kangema (Iyego society), and Embu (Rianjagi society) -- were studied. Farmers and stakeholders were interviewed through:

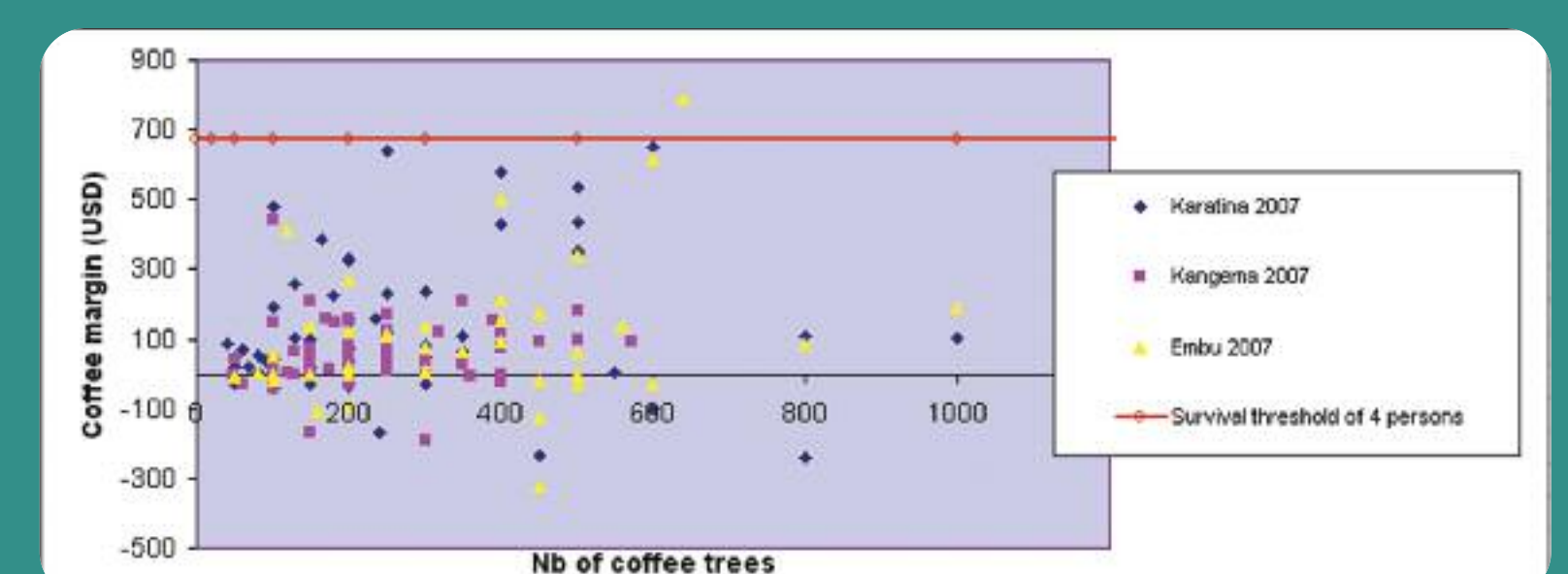
- 30 semi-structured interviews
- 160 questionnaires



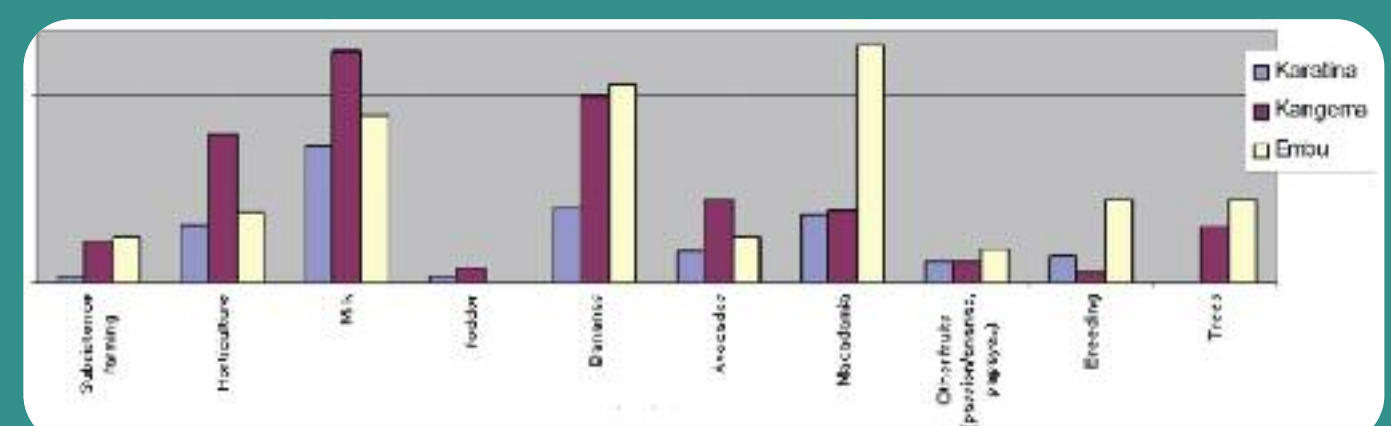
Coffee cultivated in association with bananas, Karatina

## Results

The data indicate that smallholder farmers cannot survive on the revenues generated by coffee production alone. Farmers' livelihoods are maintained through other sources of income such as horticulture and tree products, off-farm revenue, and dairy products. This explains why coffee is associated most frequently with other crops and trees (125/160). Nevertheless, coffee continues to be grown, the principle reasons being that it is a means to access credit through the cooperatives and because farmers hope for better prices in the future. Farmers' strategies to ensure sustainability depend on the agro-ecological context, the farmer's age, the coffee cooperative's commitment to a quality certification process, and market access. These strategies include various income diversification and capitalization options where animals and trees play important roles, providing fuel, timber, fruit, fertilizer and cash revenue.



Comparison of the revenue from coffee.



Farming activities practiced by farmers.



Association of animal breeding in the coffee agroforestry system, Kangema

The revitalization of coffee production in Kenya can be achieved by taking into account the overall management of the existing agroforestry system. Instead of ignoring the agroforestry system on which smallholder production is based, it should be recognized. The advantages derived from agroforestry systems could be promoted, and the disadvantages of intercropped coffee usually mentioned reduced, through partnerships between farmer's cooperatives and research programmes.



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